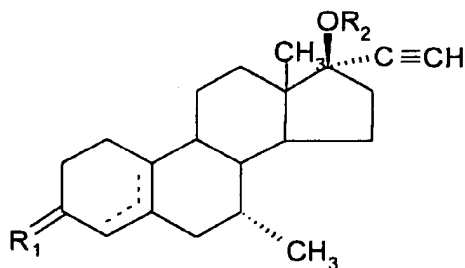


**I. In the Claims (Clean Sheet)**

1. A method of inhibiting the atherosclerotic process, comprising administering to a mammal an effective amount of a 7 $\alpha$ -methyl-17 $\alpha$ -ethynyl-estrane derivative having the general formula 1



Formula I

wherein

 $R_1 = \text{H}(\text{OR}_3)$  or O; $R_2 = \text{H}$  or  $(\text{C}_{1-18})\text{Acyl}$ ; $R_3 = \text{H}$  or  $(\text{C}_{1-18})\text{Acyl}$ ;

and the dotted line represents a double bond in the 4, 5- or the 5, 10-position.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein  $R_1 = \text{H}$ , OH or O.
3. The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein  $R_2 = \text{H}$  and the dotted line represents a double bond in the 5, 10-position.